



## Teen Pregnancy Rates Aged 15-17

### Clark County and Washington State, 1992 through 2001

#### Why we should care:

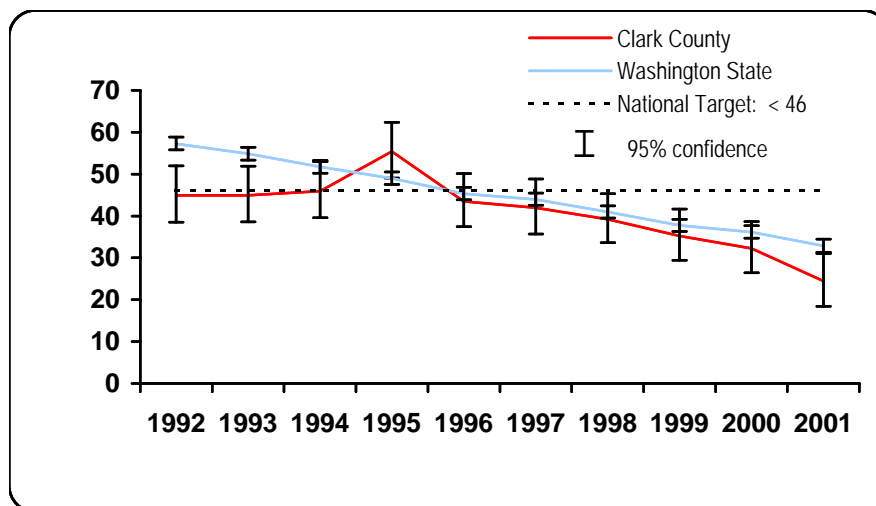
Parenthood at an early age can interrupt education or limit it to high school thereby decreasing opportunities for better jobs, housing, health care, and overall well-being for teens and their child(ren). Teen parents are more likely to smoke and have low birth weight babies who are at greater risk for health, developmental, behavioral, and social problems. Teen pregnancy and childbearing cost taxpayers an estimated \$6.9 billion annually in the United States. (1) For these reasons we focus public health efforts on preventing teen pregnancies.

#### Status:

- Clark County teen pregnancy rates continue to decline. (2,3)
- Clark County's 2001 rate of 24 pregnancies per 1,000 adolescent females aged 15-17 is significantly lower than the Washington State rate of 33 pregnancies per 1,000 adolescent females aged 15-17. (2,3)
- Clark County's 2001 rate is also well below the national target of no more than 46 pregnancies per 1,000 females aged 15-17 years. (4)

#### What we can do:

- Promote and support positive communication between youth and adults. Teens who communicate with their parents are less likely to engage in sexual intercourse and more likely to use contraception. (5)
- Support abstinence as the safest choice for teens. (6)
- Support increased access to effective teen reproductive health services. Such services include education that focuses on reducing sexual risk-taking behaviors and promoting correct and consistent use of contraceptives for sexually active teens. (7,8)
- Support active teen involvement in youth programs that value education and community service and help teens find jobs. (8)



Year	Clark County			Washington State		
	Rate per 1,000**	95% CI*	Number of Pregnancies	Rate per 1,000**	95% CI*	Number of Pregnancies
1992	44.9	(39.4, 51.0)	238	57.3	(55.8, 58.8)	5,495
1993	44.9	(39.6, 50.9)	251	54.9	(53.4, 56.3)	5,502
1994	45.9	(40.6, 51.8)	270	51.7	(50.3, 53.1)	5,419
1995	55.4	(49.7, 61.5)	350	49.0	(47.7, 50.3)	5,443
1996	43.5	(38.7, 48.7)	297	45.3	(44.1, 46.6)	5,331
1997	42.0	(37.4, 47.0)	301	44.0	(42.8, 45.2)	5,338
1998	39.2	(34.8, 44.0)	291	41.0	(39.8, 42.1)	5,089
1999	35.2	(31.1, 39.7)	265	37.7	(36.7, 38.8)	4,705
2000	32.2	(28.3, 36.6)	245	36.2	(35.1, 37.2)	4,530
2001	24.4	(21.1, 28.2)	190	32.9	(31.9, 33.9)	4,183

\*If the confidence intervals for state and county overlap in a given year, there is no significant difference between these rates.

\*\*The teen pregnancy rate is calculated by dividing the number of pregnancies among adolescent females aged 15-17 by the total number of adolescent females aged 15-17 and multiplying by 1,000 (constant).

See back side for sources



**Sources:** (1) Maynard, R.A. (1997). "The Costs of Adolescent Childbearing," in R.A. Maynard (ed.), *Kids Having Kids: Economic Costs and Social Consequences of Teen Pregnancy* (285-338), Washington, DC: Sources: (2) *Vital Registration System, Annual Statistics Files, Births 1980-2001*. [Data file]. Olympia, WA: Washington State Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics. (3) Public Health: Seattle & King County, Epidemiology, Planning, & Evaluation. (1991-2003). *VistaPHw 2.3.2*, 2002 [Computer software for public health assessment]. Seattle, WA. (4) National Target, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Healthy People 2010* Target Objective 9-7: Reduce pregnancies among adolescents aged 15-17 to no more than 46 per 1,000. (5) Miller, B. (2000, April). Families Matter: A Research Synthesis of Family Influences on Adolescent Pregnancy. Resource Center of Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention; Journal Summary. (6) Washington State Department of Health. *The Health of Washington State, Adolescent Pregnancy and Childbearing*. Olympia, WA, 2002 Aug [cited 2002, Nov]. (7) Henshaw S.K. (1998). Unintended Pregnancy in the United States. *Family Planning Perspectives*, 30 (1), 24-29. (8) Kirby, D. (1999). Reducing Adolescent Pregnancy: Approaches That Work. *Contemporary Pediatrics*, 16, 83-94.